



Michigan National Organization for Women

Post Office Box 860
East Lansing, Michigan 48826
(517) 485-9687
www.michnow.org

December 4, 2012

Honorable Gail Haines, Chair
House Health Policy Committee
892 House Office Bldg.
Lansing, Michigan

Dear Representative Haines and Members of the House Health Policy Committee:

The Michigan National Organization for Women **opposes House Bills 5763 and 5764**. Combined, this proposed legislation would amend the Michigan Adoption Code (MCL 710.23b et al.) to permit a religiously-affiliated child placing agency to carry out discriminatory adoption practices if these are written policies of the agency.

This would enshrine in state law and endorse discriminatory policies of some religiously-affiliated child placing agencies. Some religions continue to practice anti-homosexual, anti-woman, and anti-divorce policies, for instance, going so far as to bar participation of those groups in its leadership and policy decision-making.

We recommend that not only should these bills be defeated, but that any child placing agency which espouses biased and discriminatory policies based on religion, race, ethnicity, gender, marital status, and sexual orientation in its written policies or in the conduct of its child placement functions have its licensed revoked. Certainly no state funding should go to such an agency. Child placement agencies should have as their main purpose the best interest of the children, not the best interest of their own religion.

In short, these bills undo many of the civil rights gains of the past and the greater understanding and acceptance of diversity in our society.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 57633 and 5764.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mary Pollock
Legislative Vice President

NOW's purpose is to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.